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The  
**Best Portraits**  
in  
**Engraving.**

By  
**Charles Sumner.**

**Third Edition.**

**New York:**  
**Frederick Keppel.**  
66 Beckman Street.

The greater part of the following article appeared in a New York Magazine, in January, 1872.

The completion, as now issued, was given to the publisher in manuscript by Mr. Sumner, shortly before his death.

He gave his hearty approval to its publication in complete form, and expressed the hope that it would call the attention of many persons of artistic taste to the study of those early masterpieces of the engraver's art, the collection and possession of which afforded himself so much pleasure and instruction.

F. K.

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## THE BEST PORTRAITS IN ENGRAVING.

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ENGRAVING is one of the fine arts, and in this beautiful family has been the especial handmaiden of painting. Another sister is now coming forward to join this service, lending to it the charm of color. If, in our day, the "chromo" can do more than engraving, it cannot impair the value of the early masters. With them there is no rivalry or competition. Historically, as well as æsthetically, they will be masters always.

Everybody knows something of engraving, as of printing, with which it was associated in origin. School-books, illustrated papers, and shop windows are the ordinary opportunities open to all. But while creating a transient interest, or, perhaps, quickening the taste, they furnish little with regard to the art itself, especially in other days. And yet, looking at an engraving, like looking at a book, may be the beginning of a new pleasure and a new study.

Each person has his own story. Mine is simple. Suffering from continued prostration, disabling me from the ordinary activities of life, I turned to engravings for employment and pastime. With the invaluable assistance of that devoted connoisseur, the late Dr. Thies, I went through the Gray collection at Cambridge, enjoying it like

a picture-gallery. Other collections in our country were examined also. Then, in Paris, while undergoing severe medical treatment, my daily medicine for weeks was the vast cabinet of engravings, then called Imperial, now National, counted by the million, where was everything to please or instruct. Thinking of those kindly portfolios, I make this record of gratitude, as to benefactors. Perhaps some other invalid, seeking occupation without burden, may find in them the solace that I did. Happily, it is not necessary to visit Paris for the purpose. Other collections, on a smaller scale, will furnish the same remedy.

In any considerable collection, portraits occupy an important place. Their multitude may be inferred when I mention that, in one series of portfolios, in the Paris cabinet, I counted no less than forty-seven portraits of Franklin and forty-three of Lafayette, with an equal number of Washington, while all the early Presidents were numerously represented. But, in this large-company, there are very few possessing artistic value. The great portraits of modern times constitute a very short list, like the great poems or histories, and it is the same with engravings as with pictures. Sir Joshua Reynolds, explaining the difference between an historical painter and a portrait-painter, remarks that the former "paints men in general, a portrait-painter a particular man, and consequently a defective model." \* A portrait, therefore, may be an accurate presentment of its subject without æsthetic value.

But here, as in other things, genius exercises its accus-

\* Discourses before the Royal Academy, No. IV.

tomed sway without limitation. Even the difficulties of a "defective model" did not prevent Raffaele, Titian, Rembrandt, Rubens, Velasquez, or Vandyck from producing portraits precious in the history of art. It would be easy to mention heads by Raffaele, yielding in value to only two or three of his larger masterpieces, like the Dresden Madonna. Charles the Fifth stooped to pick up the pencil of Titian, saying "It becomes Cæsar to serve Titian!" True enough; but this unprecedented compliment from the imperial successor of Charlemagne attests the glory of the portrait-painter. The female figures of Titian, so much admired under the names of Flora, La Bella, his daughter, his mistress, and even his Venus, were portraits from life. Rembrandt turned from his great triumphs in his own peculiar school to portraits of unwonted power; so also did Rubens, showing that in this department his universality of conquest was not arrested. To these must be added Velasquez and Vandyck, each of infinite genius, who won fame especially as portrait-painters. And what other title has Sir Joshua himself?

Historical pictures are often collections of portraits arranged so as to illustrate an important event. Such is the famous Peace of Münster, by Terburg, just presented by a liberal Englishman to the National Gallery at London. Here are the plenipotentiaries of Holland, Spain, and Austria, uniting in the great treaty which constitutes an epoch in the Law of Nations. The engraving by Snyderhoef is rare and interesting. Similiar in character is the Death of Chatham, by Copley, where the illustrious



statesman is surrounded by the peers he had been addressing—every one a portrait. To this list must be added the pictures by Trumbull in the Rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, especially the Declaration of Independence, in which Thackeray took a sincere interest. Standing before these, the author and artist said to me, “These are the best pictures in the country,” and he proceeded to remark on their honesty and fidelity; but doubtless their real value is in their portraits.

Unquestionably the finest assemblage of portraits anywhere is that of the artists occupying two halls in the gallery at Florence, being autographs contributed by the masters themselves. Here is Raffaele, with chestnut-brown hair, and dark eyes full of sensibility, painted when he was twenty-three, and known by the engraving of Forster—Julio Romano, in black and red chalk on paper,—Massaccio, called the father of painting, much admired,—Leonardo da Vinci, beautiful and grand,—Titian, rich and splendid,—Pietro Perugino, remarkable for execution and expression,—Albert Dürer, rigid but masterly,—Gerhard Dow, finished according to his own exacting style,—and Reynolds, with fresh English face; but these are only examples of this incomparable collection, which was begun as far back as the Cardinal Leopold de Medici, and has been happily continued to the present time. Here are the lions, painted by themselves, except, perhaps, the foremost of all, Michael Angelo, whose portrait seems the work of another. The impression from this collection is confirmed by that of any group of

historic artists. Their portraits excel those of statesmen, soldiers, or divines, as is easily seen by engravings accessible to all. The engraved heads in Arnold Houbraken's biographies of the Dutch and Flemish painters, in three volumes, are a family of rare beauty.\*

The relation of engraving to painting is often discussed ; but nobody has treated it with more knowledge or sentiment than the consummate engraver Longhi in his interesting work *La Calcografia*.† Dwelling on the general aid it renders to the lovers of art, he claims for it greater merit in “publishing and immortalizing the portraits of eminent men for the example of the present and future generations;” and, “better than any other art, serving as the vehicle for the most extended and remote propagation of deserved celebrity.” Even great monuments in porphyry and bronze are less durable than these light and fragile impressions subject to all the chances of wind, water, and fire, but prevailing by their numbers where the mass succumbs. In other words, it is with engravings as with books ; nor is this the only resemblance between them. According to Longhi, an engraving is not a copy or imitation, as is sometimes insisted, but a translation. The engraver translates into another language, where light and shade supply the place of colors. The duplication of

\* De Groote Schonburgh der Nederlantsche Konetschilders en Schilderessen.

† This rare volume is in the Congressional Library, among the books which belonged originally to Hon. George P. Marsh, our excellent and most scholarly minister in Italy. I asked for it in vain at the Paris Cabinet of Engravings, and also at the Imperial Library. Never translated into French or English; there is a German translation of it by Carl Barth.

a book in the same language is a copy, and so is the duplication of a picture in the same material. Evidently an engraving is not a copy; it does not reproduce the original picture, except in drawing and expression; nor is it a mere imitation, but, as Bryant's Homer and Longfellow's Dante are presentations of the great originals in another language, so is the engraving a presentation of painting in another material which is like another language.

Thus does the engraver vindicate his art. But nobody can examine a choice print without feeling that it has a merit of its own different from any picture, and inferior only to a good picture. A work of Raffaele, or any of the great masters, is better in an engraving of Longhi or Morghen than in any ordinary copy, and would probably cost more in the market. A good engraving is an undoubted work of art, but this cannot be said of many pictures, which, like Peter Pindar's razors, seem made to sell.

Much that belongs to the painter belongs also to the engraver, who must have the same knowledge of contours, the same power of expression, the same sense of beauty, and the same ability in drawing with sureness of sight as if, according to Michael Angelo, he had "a pair of compasses in his eyes." These qualities in a high degree make the artist, whether painter or engraver, naturally excelling in portraits. But choice portraits are less numerous in engraving than in painting, for the reason, that painting does not always find a successful translator.

The earliest engraved portraits which attract attention are by Albert Dürer, who engraved his own work, translating himself. His eminence as painter was continued as engraver. Here he surpassed his predecessors, Martin Schoen in Germany, and Mantegna in Italy, so that Longhi does not hesitate to say that he was the first who carried the art from infancy in which he found it to a condition not far from flourishing adolescence. But, while recognizing his great place in the history of engraving, it is impossible not to see that he is often hard and constrained, if not unfinished. His portrait of Erasmus is justly famous, and is conspicuous among the prints exhibited in the British Museum. It is dated 1526, two years before the death of Dürer, and has helped to extend the fame of the universal scholar and approved man of letters, who in his own age filled a sphere not unlike that of Voltaire in a later century. There is another portrait of Erasmus by Holbein, often repeated, so that two great artists have contributed to his renown. That by Dürer is admired. The general fineness of touch, with the accessories of books and flowers, shows the care in its execution; but it wants expression, and the hands are far from graceful.

Another most interesting portrait by Dürer, executed in the same year with the Erasmus, is Philip Melancthon, the St. John of the Reformation, sometimes called the teacher of Germany. Luther, while speaking of himself as rough, boisterous, stormy, and altogether warlike, says, "but Master Philippus comes along softly and gently,

sowing and watering with joy according to the rich gifts which God has bestowed upon him." At the date of the print he was twenty-nine years of age, and the countenance shows the mild reformer.

Augustine Caracci, of the Bolognese family, memorable in art, added to considerable success as painter undoubted triumphs as engraver. His prints are numerous, and many are regarded with favor; but out of the long list not one is so sure of that longevity allotted to art as his portrait of Titian, which bears date 1587, eleven years after the death of the latter. Over it is the inscription, *Titiani Vicellii Pictoris celeberrimi ac famosissimi vera effigies*, to which is added beneath *Cujus nomen orbis continere non valet!* Although founded on originals by Titian himself, it was probably designed by the remarkable engraver. It is very like, and yet unlike the familiar portrait of which we have a recent engraving by Mandel, from a repetition in the gallery of Berlin. Looking at it, we are reminded of the terms by which Vasari described the great painter, *guidicioso, bello e stupendo*. Such a head, with such visible power, justifies these words, or at least makes us believe them entirely applicable. It is bold, broad, strong, and instinct with life.

This print, like the Erasmus of Dürer, is among those selected for exhibition at the British Museum, and it deserves the honor. Though only paper with black lines, it is, by the genius of the artist, as good as a picture. In all engraving nothing is better.

Contemporary with Caracci was Henry Goltzius, at Har-

lem, excellent as painter, but, like the Italian, pre-eminent as engraver. His prints show mastery of the art, making something like an epoch in its history. His unwearied skill in the use of the burin appears in a tradition gathered by Longhi from Wille, that, having commenced a line, he carried it to the end without once stopping, while the long and bright threads of copper turned up were brushed aside by his flowing beard, which at the end of a day's labor so shone in the light of a candle that his companions nicknamed him "the man with the golden beard." There are prints by him which shine more than his beard. Among his masterpieces is the portrait of his instructor, Theodore Coernhert, engraver, poet, musician, and vindicator of his country, and author of the national air, "William of Orange," whose passion for liberty did not prevent him from giving to the world translations of Cicero's Offices and Seneca's Treatise on Beneficence. But that of the engraver himself, as large as life, is one of the most important in the art. Among the numerous prints by Goltzius, these two will always be conspicuous.

In Holland Goltzius had eminent successors. Among these was Paulus Pontius, designer and engraver, whose portrait of Rubens is of great life and beauty, and Rembrandt, who was not less masterly in engraving than in painting, as appears sufficiently in his portraits of the Burgomaster Six, the two Coppenols, the Advocate Tolling, the goldsmith Lutma, all showing singular facility and originality. Contemporary with Rembrandt was Cornelius Viss-

cher, also designer and engraver, whose portraits were unsurpassed in boldness and picturesque effect. At least one authority has accorded to this artist the palm of engraving, hailing him as Corypheus of the art. Among his successful portraits is that of a cat; but all yield to what are known as the Great Beards, being the portraits of William de Ryck, an ophthalmist at Amsterdam, and of Gellius de Bouma, the Zutphen ecclesiastic. The latter is especially famous. In harmony with the beard is the heavy face, seventy-seven years old, showing the fulness of long-continued potation, and hands like the face, original and powerful, if not beautiful.

In contrast with Visscher was his companion Vandyck, who painted portraits with constant beauty and carried into etching the same Virgilian taste and skill. His aquafortis was not less gentle than his pencil. Among his etched portraits I would select that of Snyders, the animal painter, as extremely beautiful. M. Renouvier, in his learned and elaborate work, *Des Types et des Manières des Maîtres Graveurs*, though usually moderate in praise, speaks of these sketches as "possessing a boldness and delicacy which charm, being taken at the height of his genius, by the painter who knew the best how to idealize the painting of portraits."

Such are illustrative instances from Germany, Italy, and Holland. As yet, power rather than beauty presided, unless in the etchings of Vandyck. But the reign of Louis XIV. was beginning to assert a supremacy in engraving as in literature. The great school of French en-

gravers which appeared at this time brought the art to a splendid perfection, which many think has not been equalled since, so that Masson, Nanteuil, Edelinck, and Drevet may claim fellowship in genius with their immortal contemporaries, Corneille, Racine, La Fontaine, and Molière.

The school was opened by Claude Mellan, more known as engraver than painter, and also author of most of the designs he engraved. His life, beginning with the sixteenth century, was protracted beyond ninety years, not without signal honor, for his name appears among the "Illustrious Men" of France, in the beautiful volumes of Perrault, which is also a homage to the art he practiced. One of his works, for a long time much admired, was described by this author :

"It is a Christ's head, designed and shaded with his crown of thorns, and the blood that gushes forth from all parts by one single stroke, which, beginning at the tip of the nose, and so still circling on, forms most exactly everything that is represented in this plate, only by the different thickness of the stroke, which, according as it is more or less swelling, makes the eyes, nose, mouth, cheeks, hair, blood, and thorns; the whole so well represented and with such expressions of pain and affliction, that nothing is more dolorous or touching."\*

This print is known as the Sudarium of St. Veronica. Longhi records that it was thought at the time "inimitable," and was praised "to the skies;" but people think differently now. At best it is a curiosity among portraits. A

\* *Les Hommes Illustres*, par Perrault, Tome ii., p. 97. The excellent copy of this work in the Congressional Library belonged to Mr. Marsh. The prints are early impressions.



traveler reported some time ago that it was the sole print on the walls of the room occupied by the director of the Imperial Cabinet of Engravings at St. Petersburg.

Morin was a contemporary of Mellan, and less famous at the time. His style of engraving was peculiar, being a mixture of strokes and dots, but so harmonized as to produce a pleasing effect. One of the best engraved portraits in the history of the art is his Cardinal Bentivoglio; but here he translated Vandyck, whose picture is among his best. A fine impression of this print is a choice possession.

Among French masters Antoine Masson is conspicuous for brilliant hardihood of style, which, though failing in taste, is powerful in effect. Metal, armor, velvet, feather, seem as if painted. He is also most successful in the treatment of hair. His immense skill made him welcome difficulties, as if to show his ability in overcoming them. His print of Henri de Lorraine, Comte d'Harcourt, known as *Cadet à la Perle*, from the pearl in the ear, with the date 1667, is often placed at the head of engraved portraits, although not particularly pleasing or interesting. The vigorous countenance is aided by the gleam and sheen of the various substances entering into the costume. Less powerful, but having a charm of its own, is that of Brisa-cier, known as the Gray-haired Man, executed in 1664. The remarkable representation of hair in this print has been a model for artists, especially for Longhi, who recounts that he copied it in his head of Washington. Somewhat similar is the head of Charrier, the criminal judge at Lyons. Though inferior in hair, it surpasses the other in expression.

Nanteuil was an artist of different character, being to Masson as Vandyck to Visscher, with less of vigor than beauty. His original genius was refined by classical studies, and quickened by diligence. Though dying at the age of forty-eight, he had executed as many as two hundred and eighty plates, nearly all portraits. The favor he enjoyed during life was not diminished with time. His works illustrate the reign of Louis XIV., and are still admired. Among these are portraits of the King, Annie of Austria, John Baptiste van Steenberghen, the Advocate-General of Holland, a heavy Dutchman, Francois de la Motte Le Vayer, a fine and delicate work, Turenne, Colbert, La-moignon, the poet Loret, Maridat de Serrière, Louise-Mariede Gonzague, Louis Hesselin, Christine of Sweden—all masterpieces; but above these is the Pompone de Bel-lièvre, foremost among his masterpieces, and a chief masterpiece of art, being, in the judgment of more than one connoisseur, the most beautiful engraved portrait that exists. That excellent authority, Dr. Thies, who knew engraving more thoroughly and sympathetically than any person I remember in our country, said in a letter to myself, as long ago as March, 1858 :

“When I call Nanteuil’s Pompone the handsomest engraved portrait, I express a conviction to which I came when I studied all the remarkable engraved portraits at the royal cabinet of engravings at Dresden, and at the large and exquisite collection there of the late King of Saxony, and in which I was confirmed, or perhaps, to which I was led, by the director of the two establishments, the late Professor Frenzel.”

And after describing this head, the learned connoisseur proceeds :—

“There is an air of refinement, *vornehmheit*, round the mouth and nose as in no other engraving. Color and life shine through the skin, and the lips appear red.”

It is bold, perhaps, thus to exalt a single portrait, giving to it the palm of Venus; nor do I know that it is entirely proper to classify portraits according to beauty. In disputing about beauty, we are too often lost in the variety of individual tastes, and yet each person knows when he is touched. In proportion as multitudes are touched, there must be merit. As in music a simple heart-melody is often more effective than any triumph over difficulties, or bravura of manner, so in engraving the sense of the beautiful may prevail over all else, and this is the case with the Pompone, although there are portraits by others showing higher art.

No doubt there have been as handsome men, whose portraits were engraved, but not so well. I know not if Pompone was what would be called a handsome man, although his air is noble and his countenance bright. But among portraits more boldly, delicately, or elaborately engraved, there are very few to contest the palm of beauty.

And who is this handsome man to whom the engraver has given a lease of fame? Son, nephew, and grandson of eminent magistrates, high in the nobility of the robe, with two grandfathers chancellors of France, himself at the head of the magistracy of France, first President of Parliament according to inscription on the engraving, *Senatus Franciæ Princeps*, ambassador to Italy, Holland, and England, charged in the latter country by Cardinal Mazarin

with the impossible duty of making peace between the Long Parliament and Charles the First, and at his death, great benefactor of the General Hospital of Paris, bestowing upon it riches and the very bed on which he died. Such is the simple catalogue, and yet it is all forgotten.

A Funeral Panegyric pronounced at his death, now before me in the original pamphlet of the time,\* testifies to more than family or office. In himself he was much, and not of those who, according to the saying of St. Bernard, give out smoke rather than light. Pure glory and innocent riches were his, which were more precious in the sight of good men, and he showed himself incorruptible, and not to be bought at any price. It were easy for him to have turned a deluge of wealth into his house; but he knew that gifts insensibly corrupt,—that the specious pretext of gratitude is the snare in which the greatest souls allow themselves to be caught,—that a man covered with favors has difficulty in setting himself against injustice in all its forms, and that a magistrate, divided between a sense of obligations received and the care of the public interest, which he ought always to promote, is a paralytic magistrate, a magistrate deprived of a moiety of himself. So spoke the preacher, while he portrayed a charity tender and prompt for the wretched, a vehemence just and inflexible to the dishonest and wicked, with a sweetness no-

\* Panégyrique Funébre de Messire Pomponne de Bellievre, Premier Président au Parlement, prononcé á l'Hostel-Dieu de Paris, le 17 Avril, 1657, par un Chanoine régulier de la Congrégation de France. The dedication shows this to have been the work of F. Lallemand of St. Geneviève.

ble and beneficent for all ; dwelling also on his countenance, which had not that severe and sour austerity that renders justice to the good only with regret, and to the guilty only with anger ; then on his pleasant and gracious address, his intellectual and charming conversation, his ready and judicious replies, his agreeable and intelligent silence, his refusals, which were well received and obliging ; while, amidst all the pomp and splendor accompanying him, there shone in his eyes a certain air of humanity and majesty, which secured for him, and for justice itself, love as well as respect. His benefactions were constant. Not content with giving only his own, he gave with a beautiful manner still more rare. He could not abide beauty of intelligence without goodness of soul, and he preferred always the poor, having for them not only compassion but a sort of reverence. He knew that the way to take the poison from riches was to make them tasted by those who had them not. The sentiment of Christian charity for the poor, who were to him in the place of children, was his last thought, as witness especially the General Hospital endowed by him, and presented by the preacher as the greatest and most illustrious work ever undertaken by charity the most heroic.

Thus lived and died the splendid Pomponne de Bellièvre, with no other children than his works. Celebrated at the time by a Funeral Panegyric now forgotten, and placed among the Illustrious Men of France in a work remembered only for its engraved portraits, his famous life shrinks, in the voluminous *Biographie Universelle* of

Michaud, to the seventh part of a single page, and in the later *Biographie Générale* of Didot disappears entirely. History forgets to mention him. But the lofty magistrate, ambassador, and benefactor, founder of a great hospital, cannot be entirely lost from sight so long as his portrait by Nanteuil holds a place in art.

Younger than Nanteuil by ten years, Gerard Edelinck excelled him in genuine mastery. Born at Antwerp, he became French by adoption, occupying apartments in the Gobelins, and enjoying a pension from Louis XIV. Longhi says that he is the engraver whose works, not only according to his own judgment, but that of the most intelligent, deserves the first place among exemplars, and he attributes to him all perfections in highest degree, design, chiaro-oscuro, ærial perspective, local tints, softness, lightness, variety, in short everything which can enter into the most exact representation of the true and beautiful without the aid of color. Others may have surpassed him in particular things, but, according to the Italian teacher, he remains by common consent "the prince of engraving." Another critic calls him "king."

It requires no remarkable knowledge to recognize his great merits. Evidently he is a master, exercising sway with absolute art, and without attempts to bribe the eye by special effects of light, as on metal or satin. Among his conspicuous productions is the Tent of Darius, a large engraving on two sheets, after Le Brun, where the family of the Persian monarch prostrate themselves before Alexander, who approaches with Hephæstion. There is also

a Holy Family, after Raffaele, and the Battle of the Standard, after Leonardo da Vinci; but these are less interesting than his numerous portraits, among which that of Philippe de Champagne is the chief masterpiece; but there are others of signal merit, including especially that of Madame Heliot, or *La Belle Religieuse*, a beautiful French coquette praying before a crucifix; Martin van der Bogaert, a sculptor; Frederic Léonard, printer to the king; Mouton, the Lute-player; Martinus Dilgerus, with a venerable beard white with age; Jules Hardouin Mansart, the architect; also a portrait of Pompone de Bellièvre which will be found among the prints of Perrault's Illustrious Men.

The Philippe de Champagne is the head of that eminent French artist after a painting by himself, and it contests the palm with the Pompone. Mr. Marsh, who is an authority, prefers it. Dr. Thies, who places the latter first in beauty, is constrained to allow that the other is "superior as a work of the graver," being executed with all the resources of the art in its chastest form. The enthusiasm of Longhi finds expression in unusual praise:

"The work which goes the most to my blood, and with regard to which Edelinck, with good reason, congratulated himself, is the portrait of Champagne. I shall die before I cease to contemplate it with wonder always new. Here is seen how he was equally great as designer and engraver."\*

And he then dwells on various details; the skin, the flesh, the eyes living and seeing, the moistened lips, the chin covered with a beard unshaved for a few days, and the hair in all its forms.

\* *La Calcografia*, p. 176.

Between the rival portraits by Nanteuil and Edelinck it is unnecessary to decide. Each is beautiful. In looking at them we recognize anew the transient honors of public service. The present fame of Champagne surpasses that of Pompone. The artist outlives the magistrate. But does not the poet tell us that "the artist never dies?"

As Edelinck passed from the scene, the family of Drevet appeared, especially the son, Pierre Imbert Drevet, born in 1697, who developed a rare excellence, improving even upon the technics of his predecessor, and gilding his refined gold. The son was born engraver, for at the age of thirteen he produced an engraving of exceeding merit. He manifested a singular skill in rendering different substances, like Masson, by the effect of light, and at the same time gave to flesh a softness and transparency which remain unsurpassed. To these he added great richness in picturing costumes and drapery, especially in lace.

He was eminently a portrait engraver, which I must insist is the highest form of the art, as the human face is the most important object for its exercise. Less clear and simple than Nanteuil, and less severe than Edelinck, he gave to the face individuality of character, and made his works conspicuous in art. If there was excess in the accessories, it was before the age of Sartor Resartus, and he only followed the prevailing style in the popular paintings of Hyacinthe Rigaud. Art in all its forms had become florid, if not meretricious, and Drevet was a representative of his age.

Among his works are important masterpieces. I name



only Bossuet, the famed eagle of Meaux; Samuel Bernard, the rich Councillor of State; Fénelon, the persuasive teacher and writer; Cardinal Dubois, the unprincipled minister, and the favorite of the Regent of France; and Adrienne Le Couvreur, the beautiful and unfortunate actress, linked in love with the Marshal Saxe. The portrait of Bossuet has every thing to attract and charm. There stands the powerful defender of the Catholic Church, master of French style, and most renowned pulpit orator of France, in episcopal robes, with abundant lace, which is the perpetual envy of the fair who look at this transcendent effort. The ermine of Dubois is exquisite, but the general effect of this portrait does not compare with the Bossuet, next to which, in fascination, I put the Adrienne. At her death the actress could not be buried in consecrated ground; but through art she has the perpetual companionship of the greatest bishop of France.

With the younger Drevet closed the classical period of portraits in engraving, as just before had closed the Augustan age of French literature. Louis XIV. decreed engraving a fine art, and established an academy for its cultivation. Pride and ostentation in the king and the great aristocracy created a demand which the genius of the age supplied. The heights that had been reached could not be maintained. There were eminent engravers still; but the zenith had been passed. Balechou, who belonged to the reign of Louis XV., and Beauvarlet, whose life was protracted beyond the reign of terror, both produced portraits of merit. The former is noted for a certain clearness

and brilliancy, but with a hardness, as of brass or marble, and without entire accuracy of design ; the latter has much softness of manner. They were the best artists of France at the time ; but none of their portraits are famous. To these may be added another contemporary artist, without predecessor or successor, Stephen Ficquet, unduly disparaged in one of the dictionaries as “ a reputable French engraver,” but undoubtedly remarkable for small portraits, not unlike miniatures, of exquisite finish. Among these the rarest and most admired are La Fontaine, Madame de Maintenon, Rubens and Vandyck.

Two other engravers belong to this intermediate period, though not French in origin : George F. Schmidt, born at Berlin, 1712, and John George Wille, born in the small town of Königsberg, in the Grand Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, 1717, but attracted to Paris, they became the greatest engravers of the time. Their work is French, and they are the natural development of that classical school.

Schmidt was the son of a poor weaver, and lost six precious years as a soldier in the artillery at Berlin. Owing to the smallness of his size he was at length dismissed, when he surrendered to a natural talent for engraving. Arriving at Strasburg, on his way to Paris, he fell in with Wille, a wandering gunsmith, who joined him in his journey, and eventually, in his studies. The productions of Schmidt show ability, originality, and variety, rather than taste. His numerous portraits are excellent, being free and life-like, while the accessories of embroidery and drapery are rendered with effect. As an etcher he ranks

next after Rembrandt. Of his portraits executed with the graver, that of the Empress Elizabeth of Russia is usually called the most important, perhaps on account of the imperial theme, and next those of Count Rassamowsky, Count Esterhazy, and De Mounsey, which he engraved while in St. Petersburg, where he was called by the Empress, founding there the Academy of Engraving. But his real masterpieces are unquestionably Pierre Mignard and Latour, French painters, the latter represented laughing.

Wille lived to old age, not dying till 1808. During this long life he was active in the art to which he inclined naturally. His mastership of the graver was perfect, lending itself especially to the representation of satin and metal, although less happy with flesh. His *Satin Gown*, or *L'Instruction Paternelle*, after Terburgh, and *Les Musiciens Ambulans*, after Dietrich, are always admired. Nothing of the kind in engraving is finer. His style was adapted to pictures of the Dutch school, and to portraits with rich surroundings. Of the latter the principal are Comte de Saint-Florentin, Poisson Marquis de Marigny, John de Boullongne, and the Cardinal de Tencin.

Especially eminent was Wille as a teacher. Under his influence the art assumed a new life, so that he became father of the modern school. His scholars spread everywhere, and among them are acknowledged masters. He was teacher of Bervic, whose portrait of Louis XVI. in his coronation robes is of a high order, himself teacher of the Italian Toschi, who, after an eminent career, died as late as 1858; also teacher of Tardier, himself teacher of the

brilliant Désnoyers, whose portrait of the Emperor Napoleon in his coronation robes is the fit complement to that of Louis XVI.; also teacher of the German, J. G. von Müller, himself father and teacher of J. Frederick von Müller, engraver of the Sistine Madonna, in a plate whose great fame is not above its merit; also teacher of the Italian Vangeliti, himself teacher of the unsurpassed Longhi, in whose school were Anderloni and Jesi. Thus not only by his works, but by his famous scholars, did the humble gunsmith gain sway in art.

Among portraits by this school deserving especial mention is that of King Jerome of Westphalia, brother of Napoleon, by the two Müllers, where the genius of the artist is most conspicuous, although the subject contributes little. As in the case of the Palace of the Sun, described by Ovid, *Materiam superabat opus*. This work is a beautiful example of skill in representation of fur and lace, not yielding even to Drevet.

Longhi was a universal master, and his portraits are only parts of his work. That of Washington, which is rare, is evidently founded on Stuart's painting, but after a design of his own, which is now in the possession of the Swiss Consul at Venice. The artist felicitated himself on the hair, which is modelled after the French masters.\* The portraits of Michael Angelo, and of Dandolo, the venerable Doge of Venice, are admired; so also is the Napoleon, as King of Italy, with the iron crown and finest lace. But his chief portrait is that of Eugene

\**La Calcografia*, pp. 165, 418.

Beauharnais, Viceroy of Italy, full length, remarkable for plume in the cap, which is finished with surpassing skill.

Contemporary with Longhi was another Italian engraver of widely extended fame, who was not the product of the French school, Raffaello Morghen, born at Florence in 1758. His works have enjoyed a popularity beyond those of other masters, partly from the interest of their subjects, and partly from their soft and captivating style, although they do not possess the graceful power of Nanteuil and Edelinck, and are without variety. He was scholar and son-in-law of Volpato, of Rome; himself scholar of Wagner, of Venice, whose homely round faces were not high models in art. The Aurora of Guido and the Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci stand high in engraving, especially the latter, which occupied Morghen three years. Of his two hundred and one works, no less than seventy-three are portraits, among which are the Italian poets Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, also Boccaccio, and a head called Raffaello, but supposed to be that of Bendo Altoviti, the great painter's friend, and especially the Duke of Mencia on horseback, after Vandyck, which has received warm praise. But none of his portraits is calculated to give greater pleasure than that of Leonardo da Vinci, which may vie in beauty even with the famous Pompono. Here is the beauty of years and of serene intelligence. Looking at that tranquil countenance, it is easy to imagine the large and various capacities which made him not only painter, but sculptor, architect, musi-

cian, poet, discoverer, philosopher, even predecessor of Galileo and Bacon. Such a character deserves the immortality of art. Happily an old Venetian engraving reproduced in our day,\* enables us to see this same countenance at an earlier period of life, with sparkle in the eye.

Raffaello Morghen left no scholars who have followed him in portraits ; but his own works are still regarded, and a monument in Santa Croce, the Westminster Abbey of Florence, places him among the mighty dead of Italy.

Thus far nothing has been said of English engravers. Here, as in art generally, England seems removed from the rest of the world ; *Et penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos*. But though beyond the sphere of Continental art, the island of Shakespeare was not inhospitable to some of its representatives. Vandyck, Rubens, Sir Peter Lely, and Sir Godfrey Kneller, all Dutch artists, painted the portraits of Englishmen, and engraving was first illustrated by foreigners. Jacob Houbraken, another Dutch artist, born in 1698, was employed to execute portraits for Birch's " Heads of Illustrious Persons of Great Britain," published at London in 1743, and in these works may be seen the æsthetic taste inherited from his father, author of the biography of Dutch artists, and improved by study of the French masters. Although without great force or originality of manner, many of these have positive beauty. I

\* *Les Arts au Moyen Age et à l'Époque de la Renaissance*, par Paul Lacroix, p. 198.

would name especially the Sir Walter Raleigh and John Dryden.

Different in style was Bartolozzi, the Italian, who made his home in England for forty years, ending in 1807, when he removed to Lisbon. The considerable genius which he possessed was spoilt by haste in execution, superseding that care which is an essential condition of art. Hence sameness in his work and indifference to the picture he copied. Longhi speaks of him as "most unfaithful to his archetypes," and, "whatever the originals, being always Bartolozzi." Among his portraits of especial interest are several old whigs, as Mansfield and Thurlow; also the Death of Chatham, after the picture of Copley in the Vernon Gallery. But his prettiest piece undoubtedly is Mary Queen of Scots, with her little son James I., after what Mrs. Jameson calls "the lovely picture of Zuccaro at Chiswick." In the same style are his vignettes, which are of acknowledged beauty.

Meanwhile a Scotchman honorable in art comes upon the scene,—Sir Robert Strange, born in the distant Orkneys in 1721, who abandoned the law for engravings. As a youthful Jacobite he joined the Pretender in 1745, sharing the disaster of Culloden, and owing his safety from pursuers to a young lady dressed in the ample costume of the period, whom he afterwards married in gratitude, and they were both happy. He has a style of his own, rich, soft, and especially charming in the tints of flesh, making him a natural translator of Titian. His most celebrated engravings are doubtless the Venus and

the Danaë after the great Venetian colorist, but the Cleopatra, though less famous, is not inferior in merit. His acknowledged masterpiece is the Madonna of St. Jerome called The Day, after the picture by Correggio, in the gallery of Parma, but his portraits after Vandyck are not less fine, while they are more interesting,—as Charles First, with a large hat, by the side of his horse, which the Marquis of Hamilton is holding, and that of the same Monarch standing in his ermine robes; also the three royal children with two King Charles spaniels at their feet, also Henrietta Maria, the Queen of Charles. That with the ermine robes is supposed to have been studied by Raffaele Morghen, called sometimes an imitator of Strange.\* To these I would add the rare autograph portrait of the engraver, being a small head after Greuze, which is simple and beautiful.

One other name will close this catalogue. It is that of William Sharp, who was born at London in 1746, and died there in 1824. Though last in order, this engraver may claim kindred with the best. His first essays were the embellishment of pewter pots, from which he ascended to the heights of art, showing a power rarely equalled. Without any instance of peculiar beauty, his works are constant in character and expression, with every possible excellence of execution; face, form, drapery—all are as in nature. His splendid qualities appear in the Doctors of the Church, which has taken its place as the first of English engravings. It is after the picture of Guido,

\* Longhi, *La Calcografia*, p. 199.



